Agreement with Gulf Co-operation Council

*269. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have signed a framework agreement on economic cooperation to give fillip to the existing commerical and economic ties between the two countries;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry and the Foreign Minister of Kuwait, who is the Chairman of the GCC, signed an agreement in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent India and Gulf Cooperation Council have started implementing this agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have signed a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation (FAC). The Agreement was jointly signed by the Minister of Commerce and Industry, the Foreign Minister of Kuwait, in his capacity of President of GCC and Secretary-General of GCC on the 25th August, 2004 in New Delhi. The Agreement aims at expansion and liberalisation of trade and enhancement of the level of economic cooperation between India and the GCC.

(d) As a follow-up of the signing of the Agreement, research institutions have been entrusted with conducting studies on various aspects of the Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation (FAC). Discussions were held with a GCC delegation in New Delhi on 19th November, 2004, in which both sides *inter alia* agreed to continue the process of dialogue in the context of the provisions of the Agreement.

Comprehensive Action Plan for Urban Housing

*270. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA:

Will the Minister of URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to formulate a comprehensive action plan to solve housing problems faced by the urban poor and also those living in the slums; and